

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 2

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 2/12/21

Referred: Taken up

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the governor to issue a new declaration.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:**

3 **WHEREAS**, on January 14, 2021, the governor issued a declaration under AS 26.23,
4 stating that the outbreak of COVID-19 was occurring in the state because of widespread
5 community transmission; and

6 **WHEREAS**, since the initial outbreak of COVID-19 in the state in March 2020, the
7 effects have resulted in serious consequences for all residents of the state; and

8 **WHEREAS** the Senate recognizes that, because of local action, students throughout
9 the state have been deprived of in-person learning, and the state has seen increased incidence
10 of depression and other emotional harm in students as a result of school closures, as well as
11 increased instances of child abuse and food insecurity; and

12 **WHEREAS** the Senate also recognizes that communities in the state have seen fit to
13 impose lockdown orders, which have severely reduced economic activity in those
14 communities, resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs, the closure of many businesses, and
15 significant economic harm to a large proportion of Alaskans in various economic sectors; and

16 **WHEREAS**, partly because of the state's robust COVID-19 response efforts and the

1 governor's leadership, the state currently has the third-lowest COVID-19 fatality rate in the
2 United States; and

3 **WHEREAS**, because of diligent efforts, the state has one of the highest vaccination
4 rates in the United States; and

5 **WHEREAS** the Senate acknowledges the state's transition from a disaster to a
6 recovery phase and supports the reduction of mandates to carefully but fully reopen the state's
7 economy, while safely protecting Alaskans; and

8 **WHEREAS** the governor's January 14, 2021, declaration is set to expire on
9 February 14, 2021; and

10 **WHEREAS** there is insufficient time to allow the Alaska State Legislature to fully
11 debate and determine the least restrictive means to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and pass
12 legislation, instead of relying on additional emergency orders, while, at the same time, being
13 certain that the state does not lose access to federal funding for programs important to
14 Alaskans;

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Senate, without waiving the authority of the legislature
16 under AS 26.23.020(c) or 26.23.025(b), urges the governor to issue a new, narrowly defined
17 declaration, not to exceed 30 days, to access funding and protect the health and safety of
18 Alaskans.